

August 28, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: Applicants for NOAA Grants and Cooperative Agreements

(Signed 8/28/03)

FROM: Michael J. Nelson, Chief
NOAA Grants Management Division

SUBJECT: Use of a Universal Identifier by Grant Applicants, NEW Office of Management and Budget Requirement

In order to improve the statistical reporting of federal grants and cooperative agreements, the Office of Management and Budget has directed federal agencies to require all applicants to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003. The DUNS number will be required whether an applicant is submitting a paper or an electronic application, and whether an applicant is applying for a new award or renewal of a current award. Therefore, we encourage all grantees and potential applicants to obtain a DUNS number.

Use of the DUNS number government-wide will provide a cost-effective means to identify entities receiving those awards and their business relationships. The identifier will be used for tracking purposes, and to validate address and point of contact information. The DUNS number already is in use by the federal government to identify entities receiving federal contracts, and by some agencies in their grant and cooperative agreement processes.

The DUNS number is a unique nine-character identification number provided by the commercial company Dun & Bradstreet. There is no charge to obtain a DUNS number.

You are encouraged to obtain a DUNS number now if you believe you will be submitting an application(s) to any Federal agency on or after October 1, 2003. Proactively obtaining a DUNS number now will facilitate the receipt and acceptance of applications after September 2003.

A DUNS number is not required for applications submitted in response to announcements with deadlines on or before September 30, 2003, regardless of when the award is made, or for other types of applications submitted before September 30 (e.g., unsolicited applications).

You also must obtain a DUNS number before you can register in the Federal Government's Central Contractor Registry, which is required to do business with the Government.

To obtain a DUNS number in about 10 minutes, call 1-866-705-5711 and navigate through the voice prompts as follows:

1. Enter "3" to register your business and obtain a DUNS number
2. Enter "2" for assistance
3. Enter "1" to create a new listing
4. Enter "1" for Federal Registration. At this point, a service representative will answer, and suggest that you buy the Credit Builder Service. This is not necessary to do business with the Government. If you want to do business with other vendors outside the government, this is an optional service that allows you to do business using a line of credit.
5. Provide answers to the following questions:
 - a) Name of business
 - b) Business address
 - c) Local phone number
 - d) Name of the CEO/business owner
 - e) Legal structure of the business (corporation, partnership, proprietorship)
 - f) Year business started
 - g) Primary line of business
 - h) Total number of employees (full and part time)

Further information can be found in the Federal Register, located at:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2003/pdf/03-16356.pdf>.